MAIN ENTRY ASSIGNMENT

There is both art and science to cataloging and you will find differences in records in different catalogs – even though we’re all supposed to be using the same AACR2 rules.

My number one rule: more information is more. Add as much to the MARC record as you can to give your patron a chance to find the material. Keep in mind that students are use to finding information through Google and your catalog database is REALLY small and the chances of the students having the skill or tenacity to keep at it until they find the material they want is not very high. Remember – short attention span. So – you will not be marked down for having MORE information than is necessary but I will notice if you don’t have enough.

It used to be in the olden days that we had to catalog briefly in order to get as much information on a card (or cards) as we could but now our electronic catalogs can pump as much information out to the user as we have time for.

Some general notes about common cataloging errors:

**AUTHOR DATES**

* Take time to look for the author dates for the 100 $d field. Easiest way – *Wikpedia*, for example

**CAPITALIZATION**

* Remember titles are written with the first word capitalized and the rest of the words lower case unless it is a proper noun our adjective: e.g. Celtic fairy tales
* If a title starts with a, an, the, capitalize the initial article and the next word in the title: e.g. A Terrible Christmas (Christmas is capitalized because it is a proper noun)

**PAGINATION**

* This was a little tricky for some of the books because the (a) books were not paginated and you would have had to count each page and enter the information in brackets in the 300 $a field to indicated that you supplied the information, e.g. [31] p.
* Some of you used records from other sources (copy cataloging) which is fine – I recommend it – but you need to make sure that the record you are consulting is exactly what I have asked you to catalog. Some of you put the number of pages in the Phillips book at 283 p. when the edition that I asked you to catalog had 277 p.
* No matter what source you use to help you catalog you have to make sure that the information in someone else’s MARC record matches the material you are cataloging.

**PLACE OF PUBLICATION**

* The absolutely correct abbreviation for states is the old post office style of abbreviation, e.g Calif. instead of CA but I’m seeing more records show up with the new style post office abbreviations, so that is okay with me. States should always be abbreviated rather than written out: e.g. MN rather than Minnesota

**SUMMARY NOTE**

* The 520 field (a must in my class) should be written in a paragraph style. Give me enough information so that I can tell something about the book. Too brief of information is the same thing as not telling me anything. This is particularly true for fiction.

**TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS**

* Typos will result in an automatic deduction. Why, because if you type it wrong no one will be able to find your record unless they type it exactly wrong the way you mistyped it. Be sure to proofread.

**TITLE STATEMENT**

* In the 245 $c field you have the main persons responsible for the work. The main person responsible is listed in the 100 $a field but the others listed in the 245 $c should show up in a 700 $a field. e.g. *Celtic Fairy Tales*
* 100 $a Jacobs, Joseph
* 245 $c collected by Joseph Jacobs ; illustrated by John D. Batten
* 700 $a Batton, John D.

**TITLES IN A FIELD**

* AACR2 does not use italics or quote marks to indicate titles – just the first word in the title is capitalized, e.g. From bad to worse, Hard to beat and A Terrible Christmas

**ALL IN ALL** I think it went very well. Again, this is a new world to you and our job for the rest of this class is to become familiar enough with MARC records so that you can spot a poor one sent to you by a vendor or one that you find in another catalog, or one that is INCOMPLETE and you will have an idea of how to complete it. No school librarian will have time (or should take time) to do a lot of original cataloging.